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CONVERSATION



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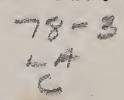


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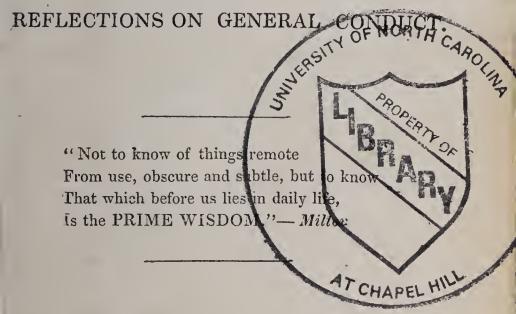
ART OF CONVERSATION:

TO WHICH ARE ADDED



MISCELLANEOUS THOUGHTS

AND



LONDON:

J. TAYLOR, 1, RED LION ST., HOLBORN.
1838.

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THE

ART OF CONVERSATION.

As order or method are of very little consequence in treating of this subject, I will content myself by giving a set of miscellaneous thoughts upon the "Art of Conversation," couched in a few words, from which, the reader may furnish himself with a competent knowledge of what is to be studied, and what to be avoided in conversation. If the reader should find the same thought twice, it is hoped, his candor will overlook a fault not easy to be avoided, in putting together such a variety of unconnected matter. There are few of the following sentences, that will not furnish a good deal of thought, or that are to be understood to their full extent without some consideration.

He who knows the world, will not be too bashful, He who knows himself, will not be impudent.

Do not endeavour to shine in all companies.

Leave room for your hearers to imagine something within you beyond all you have said. And remember, the more you are praised, the more you will be envied.

If you would add a lustre to all your accomplishments, study a modest behaviour. To excel in any thing valuable is great; but to be above conceit on account of one's accomplishments is greater. Consider, if you have rich natural gifts, you owe them to the divine bounty. If you have improved your understanding, and studied virtue, you have only done your duty. And thus there seems little ground left for vanity.

You need not tell all the truth, unless to those who have a right to know it all. But let all you tell be truth.

Insult not another for his want of a talent you possess: he may have others, which you want.

Praise your friends; and let your friends praise you.

If you treat your inferiors with familiarity, expect the same from them.

If you give a jest, take one.

Let all your jokes be truly jokes. Jesting sometimes ends in sad earnest.

If a favour is asked of you, grant it, if you can. If not, refuse it in such a manner, as that one denial may be sufficient.

Wit without humanity degenerates into bitterness. Learning without prudence into pedantry.

In the midst of mirth, reflect that many of your fellow-creatures round the world are expiring; and that your turn will come shortly. So you will keep your life uniform and free from excess.

Love your fellow-creature, though vicious. Hate vice in the friend you love the most.

Whether is the continual laugher, or the morose the most disagreeable companion?

Reproof is a medicine like mercury or opium; if it be improperly administered with respect either to the adviser or the advised, it will do harm instead of good.

Nothing is more unmannerly than to reflect on any man's profession, sect, or natural infirmity. He who stirs up against himself another's self-love, provokes the strongest passion in human nature.

Be careful of your word even in keeping the most trifling appointment. But do not blame another for a failure of that kind, till you have heard his excuse.

Never offer advice, but where there is some probability of its being followed.

If a great person has omitted rewarding your services, do not talk of it. Perhaps he may not yet have had an opportunity. For they have always on hand expectants innumerable, and the clamorous are too generally gratified before the deserving. Besides, it is the way to draw his displeasure upon you, which can do you no good, but will make bad worse. If the services you did were voluntary, you ought not to expect any return, because you made a present of them unasked. And a free gift is not to be turned into a loan, to draw the person you have served into debt. If you have served a great person merely with a view to self-interest, perhaps he is aware of that, and rewards you accordingly. Nor can you justly complain: He owes you nothing; it was not him you meant to serve.

Fools pretend to foretell what will be the issue of things, and are laughed at for their awkward conjectures. Wise men, being aware of the uncertainty of human affairs, and having observed how small a matter often produces a great change, are modest in their conjectures.

He who talks too fast, out-runs his hearer's thoughts. He who speaks too slow, gives his hearer pain by hindering his thoughts, as a rider who frets his horse by reining him in too much.

Never think to entertain people with what lies out of their way, be it ever so curious in its kind. Who would think of regaling a circle of ladies with the beauties of *Homer's* Greek, or a company of country squires with *Sir Isaac Newton's* discoveries.

Never fish for praise: It is not worth the bait.

Do well: but don't boast of it. For that will lessen the commendation you might otherwise have deserved.

He, who is guilty of flattery, declares himself to be sunk from every noble and manly sentiment, and shews, that he thinks the person he presumes upon, deprived of modesty, and discernment. Though flattery is so common in courts, it is the very insolence of rudeness.

To offer advice to an angry man, is like blowing against a tempest.

Too much preciseness and solemnity in pronouncing what one says in common conversation, as if one was preaching, is generally taken for an indication of self-conceit and arrogance.

Make your company a rarity, and people will value it. Men despise what they can easily have.

Value truth, however you come by it. Who would not pick up a jewel, that lay on a dunghill?

The beauty of behaviour consists in the manner, not the matter of your discourse.

If your superior treats you with familiarity, it will not therefore become you to treat him in the same manner.

Men of many words are generally men of many puffs.

A good way to avoid impertinent and pumping enquiries, is by answering with another question. An evasion may also serve the purpose. But a lie is inexcusable on any occasion, especially, when used to conceal the truth, from one who has no authority to demand it.

To reprove with success, the following circumstances are necessary, viz. mildness, secrecy, intimacy, and the esteem of the person you would reprove.

If you be nettled with severe raillery, take care never to shew that you are stung, unless you choose to provoke more. The way to avoid being made a butt, is not to set up for an archer.

To set up for a critic is bullying mankind.

Reflect upon the different appearances things make to you from what they did some years ago and don't imagine that your opinion will never alter, because you are extremely positive at present. Let the remembrance of your past changes of sentiment make you more flexible.

If ever you was in a passion, did you not find reason afterwards to be sorry for it, and will you again allow yourself to be guilty of a weakness, which will certainly be in the same manner followed by repentance, besides being attended with pain?

Never argue with any but men of sense and temper.

It is ill-manners to trouble people with talking too much either of yourself, or your affairs. If you are full of yourself, consider, that you, and your affairs, are not so interesting to other people as to you.

Keep silence sometimes, upon subjects which you are known to be a judge of. So your silence, where you are ignorant, will not discover you.

Some ladies will forgive silliness; but none illmanners. And there are but few capable of judging of your learning or genius; but all of your behaviour.

Don't judge by one view of a person or thing.

Think like the wise; but talk like ordinary people. Never go out of the common road, but for somewhat.

Don't dispute against facts well established,

merely because there is somewhat unaccountable in them. That the world should be created of nothing is to us inconceivable; but not therefore to be doubted.

There is no occasion to trample upon the meanest reptile, nor to sneak to the greatest prince. Insolence and baseness are equally unmanly.

As you are going to a party of mirth, think of the hazard you run of misbehaving. While you are engaged, do not wholly forget yourself. And after all is over, reflect how you have behaved. If well, be thankful: it is more than you could have promised. If otherwise, be more careful for the future.

Do not sit dumb in company. That looks either like pride, cunning, or stupidity. Give your opinion modestly, but freely; hear that of others with candour; and ever endeavour to find out, and to communicate truth.

If you have seen a man misbehave once, do not from thence conclude him a fool. If you find he has been in a mistake in one particular, do not at once conclude him void of understanding. By that way of judging, you can entertain a favourable opinion of no man upon earth, nor even of your self.

In mixed company, be readier to hear than to speak, and put people upon talking of what is in their own way. For then you will both obligation, and be most likely to improve by their conversation.

Humanity will direct to be particularly cautious, of treating with the least appearance of neglect those, who have lately met with misfortunes, and are sunk in life. Such persons are apt to think themselves slighted, when no such thing is intended. Their minds being already sore, feel the least rub very severely. And who would be so cruel as to add affliction to the afflicted?

Too much company is worse than none.

To smother the generosity of those, who have obliged you, is imprudent, as well as ungrateful. The mention of kindnesses received may excite those who hear it to deserve your good word, by imitating the example which they see does others so much honour.

Learning is like bank-notes. Prudence and

good behaviour are like silver, useful upon all occasions.

If you have been once in company with an idle person, it is enough. You need never go again. You have heard all he knows. And he has had no opportunity of learning anything new. For idle people make no improvements.

Deep learning will make you acceptable to the learned; but it is only an easy and obliging behaviour, and entertaining conversation, that will make you agreeable in all companies.

Men repent speaking ten times for once that they repent keeping silence.

It is an advantage to have concealed one's opinion. For by that means you may change your judgment of things (which every wise man finds reason to do) and not be accused of fickleness.

There is hardly any bodily blemish, which a winning behaviour will not conceal, or make tolerable; and there is no external grace, which illnature or affection will not deform.

If you mean to make your side of the argument

appear plausible, do not prejudice people against what you think truth by your passionate manner of defending it.

There is an affected humility more unsufferable than downright pride, as hypocrisy is more abominable than libertinism. Take care that your virtues be genuine and unsophisticated.

If you put on a proud carriage, people will want to know what there is in you to be proud of. And it is ten to one whether they value your accomplishments at the same rate as you. And the higher you aspire, they will be the more desirous to mortify you.

Nothing is more nauseous than apparent selfsufficiency. For it shews the company two things, which are extremely disagreeable; That you have a high opinion of yourself; and, That you have comparatively a mean opinion of them.

It is the concussion of passions, that produces a storm. Let an angry man alone, and he will cool of himself.

It is but seldom, that very remarkable occurrences fall out in life. The evenness of your temper will be in most danger of being troubled by triflez which take you by surprise.

It is as obliging in company, especially of superiors, to listen attentively, as to talk entertainingly.

Don't think of knocking out another person's brains, because he differs in opinion from you. It will be as rational to knock yourself on the head, because you differ from yourself ten years ago.

If you want to gain any man's good opinion, take particular care how you behave, the first time you are in company with him. The light you appear in at first, to one who is neither inclinable to think well nor ill of you, will strongly prejudice him either for or against you.

Good humour is the only shield to keep off the darts of the satirical railer. If you have a quiver well-stored, and are sure of hitting him between the joints of the harness, do not spare him. But you had better not bend your bow than miss your aim.

The modest man is seldom the object of envy.

In the company of ladies, do not labour to

establish learned points by long-winded arguments. They do not care to take too much pains to find out truth.

Talkativeness in some men proceeds from what is extremely amiable, I mean, an open, communicative temper. Nor is it an universal rule, that whoever talks much, must say a great deal not worth hearing. I have known men who talked freely, because they had a great deal to say, and delighted in communicating for their own advantage, and that of the company. And I have known others, who commonly sat dumb, because they could find nothing to say. In England, we blame every one who talks freely, let his converversation be ever so entertaining and improving. In France, they look upon every man as a gloomy mortal, whose tongue does not make an uninterrupted noise. Both these judgments are unjust.

If you talk sentences, do not at the same time give yourself a magisterial air in doing it. An easy conversation is the only agreeable one, especially in mixed company.

Be sure of the fact, before you lose time in searching for a cause.

If you have a friend that will reprove your faults and foibles, consider, you enjoy a blessing, which the king upon the throne cannot have.

In disputes upon moral, or scientific points, ever let your aim be to come at truth, not to conquer your opponent. So you never shall be at a loss, in losing the argument, and gaining a new discovery.

What may be very entertaining in company with ignorant people, may be tiresome to those who know more of the matter than yourself.

There is no method more likely to cure passion and rashness, than the frequent and attentive consideration of one's own weaknesses. This will work into the mind an habitual sense of the need one has of being pardoned, and will bring down the swelling pride and obstinacy of heart, which are the cause of hasty passion.

If you happen to fall into company, where the talk runs into party, obscenity, scandal, folly, or vice of any kind, you had better pass for morose or unsocial, among people whose good opinion is not worth having, than shock your own conscience,

by joining in conversation which you must disapprove of.

If you would have a right account of things from illiterate people, let them tell their story in their own way. If you put them upon talking according to logical rules, you will quite confound them.

I was much pleased with the saying of a gentleman, who was engaged in a friendly argument with another upon a point in morals. "You and I (says he to his antagonist) seem, as far as I hitherto understand, to differ considerably in our opinions. Let us, if you please, try wherein we can agree." The scheme in most disputes is to try who shall conquer, or confound the other. It is therefore no wonder that so little light is struck out in conversation, where a candid enquiry after truth is the least thing thought of.

If a man complains to you of his wife, a woman of her husband, a parent of a child, or a child of a parent, be very cautious how you meddle between such near relations, to blame the behaviour of one to the other. You will only have the hatred of both parties, and do no good with either. But

this does not hinder your giving both parties, or either, your best advice in a prudent manner.

Be prudently secret. But don't affect to make a secret of what all the world may know. Nor give yourself airs of being as close as a conspirator. You will better disappoint idle curiosity by seeming to have nothing to conceal.

Never blame a friend without joining some commendation to make reproof go down.

It is by giving a loose to folly, in conversation and action, that people expose themselves to contempt and ridicule. The modest man may deprive himself of some part of the applause of some sort of people in conversation, by not shining altogether so much as he might have done. Or he may deprive himself of some lesser advantages in life by his reluctancy in putting himself forward. But it is only the rash and impetuous talker, or actor, that effectually exposes himself in company, or ruins himself in life. It is therefore easy to determine which is the safest side to err on.

It is a base temper in mankind, that they will not take the smallest slight at the hand of those who have done them the greatest kindness.

If you fall into the greatest company, in a natural and unforced way, look upon yourself as one of them; and do not sneak, nor suffer any one to treat you unworthily, without just shewing, that you know behaviour. But if you see them disposed to be rude, over-bearing, or purse-proud, it will be more decent and less troublesome to retire, than to wrangle with them.

If at any time you chance, in conversation, to get on a side of an argument which you find not to be tenable, or any other way over-shoot yourself, turn off the subject in as easy and good humoured a way as you can. If you proceed still, and endeavour, right or wrong, to make your first point good, you will only entangle yourself the more, and in the end expose yourself.

Never over praise any absent person: especially ladies, in company of ladies. It is the way to bring envy and hatred upon those whom you wish well to.

To try, whether your conversation is likely to be acceptable to people of sense, imagine what you say writ down, or printed, and consider how it would read; whether it would appear natural, im proving, and entertaining; or affected, unmeaning, or mischievous.

It is better, in conversation with positive men, to turn off the subject in dispute with some merry conceit, than keep up the contention to the disturbance of the company.

Don't give your advice upon any extraordinary emergency, nor your opinion upon any difficult point, especially in company of eminent persons, without first taking time to deliberate. If you say nothing, it may not be known whether your silence was owing to ignorance of the subject, or to modesty. If you give a rash and crude opinion, you are effectually and irrecoverably exposed.

If you fill your fancy, while you are in company, with suspicions of their thinking meanly of you; if you puff yourself up with imaginations of appearing to them a very witty, or profound person; if you discompose yourself with fears of misbehaving before them; or any way put yourself out of yourself; you will not appear in your natural colour, but in that of an affected, personated character, which is always disagreeable.

It may be useful to study, at leisure, a variety of proper phrases for such occasions as are mos frequent in life, as civilities to superiors, expressions of kindness to inferiors; congratulations, condolence, expressions of gratitude, acknowledgment of faults, asking or denying of favours, &c. I prescribe no particular phrases, because, our language continually fluctuating, they must soon become stiff and unfashionable. The best method of acquiring the accomplishment of graceful and easy manner of expression for the common occasions of life, is attention, and imitation of well-bred people. Nothing makes a man appear more contemptible than barrenness, pedantry, or impropriety of expression.

If you would be employed in serious business don't set up for a buffoon.

Flattery is a compound of falsehood, selfishness, servility, and ill-manners. Any one of these qualities is enough to make a character thoroughly odious. Who then would be the person, or have any concern with him, whose mind is deformed by four such vices?

If you must speak upon a difficult point, be the last speaker, if you can.

You will not be agreeable to company, if you strive to bring in or keep up a subject unsuitable to their capacities, or humour.

You will never convince a man of ordinary sense by overbearing his understanding. If you dispute with him in such a manner, as to shew a due deference for his judgment, your complaisance may win him, tho' your saucy arguments could not.

Avoid disputes altogether, if possible: especially in mixed companies, and with ladies. You will hardly convince any one, and may disoblige or startle them, and get yourself the character of a conceited pragmatical person. Whereas that of an agreeable companion, which you may have without giving yourself any great air of learning or depth, may be more advantageous to you in life, and will make you welcome in all companies.

The frequent use of the name of God, or the Devil; allusions to passages of Scripture; mocking at anything serious and devout; oaths, vulgar bywords, cant phrases, affected hard words, when familiar terms will do as well; scraps of Latin, Greek, or French; quotations from plays spoke in a theatrical manner; all these much used in conversation render a person very contemptible to grave and wise men.

If you send people away from your company well-pleased with themselves, you need not fear but they will be well enough pleased with you, whether they have received any instruction from you or not. Most people had rather be pleased than instructed.

Don't tell unlikely or silly stories, if you know them to be true.

There is no greater rudeness to company, than entertaining them with scolding your servants.

Avoid little oddities in behaviour. But do not despise a man of worth, for his having something awkward, or less agreeable, in his manner.

I hardly know any company more disagreeable than that of some people, who are ever straining to hook in some quirk of wit, or drollery, whatever be the subject of conversation. Reflect in yourself, after you have passed some hours in such company, and observe whether it leaves anything in your mind but emptiness, levity, or disgust. Again observe, after you have passed some time in the conversation of men of wisdom and learning, if you do not find your mind filled with judicious reflections, and worthy resolutions. If you do not, it is because you have not a mind capable of them.

If you can express yourself to be perfectly understood in ten words, never use a dozen. Go not about to prove, by a long series of reasoning, what all the world is ready to own.

If any one takes the trouble of finding fault with you, you ought in reason to suppose he has some regard for you, else he would not run the hazard of disobliging you, and drawing upon himself your hatred.

Do not ruffle or provoke any man; why should any one be the worse for coming into company with you? Be not yourself provoked: Why should you give any man the advantage over you?

To say that one has opinions very different from those commonly received, is saying that he either loves singularity, or that he thinks for himself. Which of the two is the case, can only be found by examining the grounds of his opinions.

Don't appear to the public too sure, or too eager upon any project. If it should miscarry, which it is a chance but it does, you will be laughed at. The surest way to prevent which, is not to tell your designs or prospects in life.

If you give yourself a loose in mixed company, you may almost depend on being pulled to pieces as soon as your back is turned, however they may seem entertained with your conversation.

For common conversation, men of ordinary abilities will upon occasion do well enough. And you may always pick something out of any man's discourse, by which you may profit. For an intimate friend to improve by, you must search half a county over, and be glad if you can find him at last.

Don't give your time to every superficial acquaintance; it is bestowing what is to you of inestimable worth, upon one, who is not likely to be the better for it.

If a person has behaved to you in an unaccountable manner, don't at once conclude him a bad man, unless you find his character given up by all who know him: nor then, unless the facts alledged against him be undoubtedly proved, and wholly inexcusable. But this is not advising you to trust a person, whose character you have any reason to suspect. Nothing can be more absurd than the common way of fixing people's characters. Such a one has disobliged me; therefore he is a villain.

Such another has done me a kindness; therefore he is a saint.

Never contend with superiors, nor with inferiors. If you get the better of the first, you provoke them; if you engage with the latter, you debase yourself.

If you act a part truly great, you may expect that men of mean spirits, who cannot reach you, will endeavour, by detraction, to pull you down to their level. But posterity will do you justice; for envy will die with you.

Superficial people are more agreeable the first time you are in their company, than ever afterwards. Men of judgment improve every succeeding conversation; beware therefore of judging by one interview.

You will not anger a man so much by shewing him that you hate him, as by expressing a contempt of him.

Most women had rather have any of their good qualities slighted, than their beauty. Yet that is the most inconsiderable accomplishment of a woman of real merit.

You will be always reckoned by the world nearly of the same character with those whose company you keep.

You will please so much the less, if you go into company determined to shine. Let your conversation appear to rise out of thoughts suggested by the occasion, not strained, or premeditated; nature always pleases: affectation is always odious.

MISCELLANEOUS THOUGHTS.

To pursue worthy ends by wise means is the whole of active prudence. And this must be done with resolution, diligence, and perseverance, till the point is gained, or appears impracticable.

Action and contemplation are no way inconsistent; but rather reliefs to one another. When you are engaged in study, throw business out of your thoughts. When in business, think of your business only.

To a man of business, knowledge is an ornament. To a studious man, action is a relief.

If you ever promise at all, take care, at least, that it be so as no body may suffer by trusting to you.

If you have debtors, let not your lenity get the better of your prudence; nor your care of your own interest make you forget humanity. A prison is not for the unfortunate; but the knavish.

Tractableness to advice, and firmness against temptation, are no way inconsistent.

There is more true greatness in generously owning a fault, and making proper reparation for it, than in obstinately defending a wrong conduct. But quitting your purpose, retreat rather like a lion than a cur.

A mind hardened against affliction, and a body against pain and sickness, are the two securities of earthly happiness.

Let a person find out his own peculiar weakness, and be ever suspicious of himself on that side. Let a passionate man, for example, resolve always to shew less resentment than reason might justify; there is no danger of his erring on that side. Let a talkative man resolve always to say less than the most talkative person in the company he is in. If

one has reason to suspect himself of loving money too much, let him give always at least somewhat more than has been given by a noted miser.

A man who does not know in general his own weakness, must either be a person of high rank, or a fool.

How comes it, that we judge so severely the actions we did a great while ago? It is because we are now at a proper distance, and look upon them with an indifferent eye, as on those of another person. The very objects which now employ us so much, and the conduct we now justify so strenuously, can we say that the time will not come, when we shall look upon them as we now do upon our follies of ten or twenty years backwards? Why can we not view ourselves, and our own behaviour, at all times in the same manner? This shews our partiality for ourselves in a most absurd light.

When you are dead, the letters which compose your name will be no more to you, than the rest of the alphabet. Leave the rage of fame to wits and heroes. Do you strive to live usefully in this world, and you will be happy in the next.

It is best, if you can keep quite clear of the

great. But if you happen at any time to be thrust into their company, keep up in your behaviour to them the dignity of a man of spirit and worth, which is the only true greatness. If you sneak and cringe, they will trample upon you.

Beware of mean spirited-people. They are commonly revengeful and malicious.

The following advantages are likely to make a compleatly accomplished man. 1. Good natural parts. 2. A good temper. 3. Good, and general, education, begun early. 4. Choice, not immense, reading, and careful digesting. 5. Experience of various fortune. 6. Conversation with men of letters and of business. 7. Knowledge of the world, gained by conversation, business, and travel.

If the world suspect your well-intended designs, be not uneasy. It only shews that mankind are themselves false and artful, which is the cause of their being suspicious.

Never set up for a jack-in-an-office. Men of real worth are modest, and decline employment, tho' much fitter for it than those who thrust themselves forward. But if good can be done, do it, if no one else will.

If your enemy is forced to have recourse to a lie to blacken you, consider what a comfort it is, to think of your having supported such a character, as to render it impossible for malice to hurt you without the aid of falsehood. And trust to the genuine fairness of your character to clear itself in the end.

Whoever has gone through much of life, must remember, that he has thrown away a great deal of useless uneasiness upon what was much worse in his apprehension, than in reality.

A miser will sometimes serve you any way you please to ask him, purely to save his money.

If you give away nothing till you die, even your own children will hardly thank you for what you leave them.

A great number of small favours will engage some people more to you, than one great one. And where they hope for more and more, they will be willing to go on to serve you.

The truest objects of charity, are those whom modesty conceals.

It will be a great misfortune to you, if an inti-

mate friend, or near relation, falls into poverty. You must either lend your assistance, or be ill looked upon. And people are often blamed for niggardliness, when, if all the truth were known (which might be very improper) they would be justified in having given to the full extent of their abilities.

A man's character and behaviour in public, and at home, are often as different as a lady's looks at a ball, and in a morning before she has gone through the ceremony of the toilet. But real merit, like artless beauty, shines forth at all times distinguishingly illustrious.

There is nothing more agreeable to human nature, than to have somewhat moderately to employ both mind and body. There is nothing more unnatural than for a creature endowed with various active powers to be wholly inactive. Hence the silly and mischievous inventions of cards, dice, and other amusements, which empty people have been obliged to have recourse to, as a kind of artificial employments, to prevent human nature from sinking into an absolute lethargy. Why might not our luxurious wasters of heaven's most inestimable gift, as well employ the same eagerness of activity in somewhat that might turn to

account to themselves and others, as in the insipid and unprofitable drudgery of the card-table?

To serve your friends, to your own ruin, is romantic. To think of none but yourself, is sordid.

Riches, and happiness, have nothing to do with one another, though extreme poverty and misery be nearly related.

Judge of yourself by that respect you have voluntarily paid you by men of undoubted integrity and discernment, and who have no interest to flatter you. Act up to your character. Support your dignity. But do not make yourself unhappy, if you meet not with the honour you deserve from those whose esteem no one values.

Despise trifling affronts, and they will vanish. A little water will put out a fire, which, blown up, would burn a city.

Give away what you can part with. Throw away nothing: you know not how much you may miss it.

Provide for after-life, so as to enjoy the present

Enjoy the present, so as to leave something for the time to come.

Avoid too many, and great, obligations. It is running into debt beyond what you may be able to pay.

Conclude at least nine parts in ten of what is handed about by common fame to be false.

Don't offend a bad man; because he will stick at nothing to be revenged. It is cruel to insult a good man, who deserves nothing but good. A great man may easily crush you. And there is none so mean, who cannot do mischief. Therefore follow peace with all men.

To carry the triumph over a person you have got the better of, too far, is mean, and imprudent: it is mean, because you have got the better; it is imprudent, because it may provoke him to revenge your insolence in some desperate way.

Presents ought to be genteel; not expensive: they are not valued by generous minds for their own sake; but as marks of love or esteem.

Whoever anticipates troubles, will find he has

thrown away a great deal of terror and anguish to no purpose.

Accustom yourself to have some employment for every hour you can prudently snatch from business. This book was put together in that manner, else it could never have been written by its author.

When you find, you don't care to look into your affairs, you may assure yourself that they will soon not be fit to look into.

If you are a master, don't deprive yourself of so great a rarity as a good servant for a slight offence. If you are a dependant, don't throw yourself out of a good place for a slight affront.

Do what good offices you can: but leave yourself at liberty from promises and engagements.

Let no one overload you with favours: you willfind it an unsufferable burden.

There are many doublings in the human heart: do not think you can find out the whole of a man's real character at once, unless he is a fool.

If you would embroil yourself with all mankind

at once, you have only to oppose every man's prevailing passion. Endeavour to mortify the proud man; irritate the passionate; put the miser to expense; and you will have them all against you. On the other hand, if you had rather live peaceably, give way a little to the particular weakness of those you converse with.

It will take some time to raise your fortune in a fair way, and to fit you for a better world: it will therefore be proper to begin a course of industry and piety as early as possible.

The friendship of an artful man is mere selfinterest: you will get nothing by it.

If you trust a known knave, people will not so much as pity you, when you suffer by him.

In dealing with a person you suspect, it may be useful in conversation to draw him into difficulties, if possible, as they cross-examine witnesses at the bar, in order to find out the truth. It may even be of use to set him a talking; in the inadvertency and hurry of conversation, he may discover himself.

Consider how difficult a thing it must be to de-

ceive the general eye of mankind, who are as much interested to detect you, as you are to deceive them.

He is surely a man of a greater reach, who can conduct his affairs without being obliged to have recourse to tricks and temporary expedients, than with them; he who knows how to secure the interest both of this world and the next, than he who cannot contrive to get a comfortable subsistence in this world without damning his soul.

If you are ill-used by a bad man, especially a great one, put up the injury quietly, and be thankful it was no worse.

If you let alone making your will till you come to a death-bed, you will not do it properly.

If you want to shew a person, that you see through his crafty designs, a hint between jest and earnest, may do better than telling him bluntly and fully how he stands in your mind: from a little, he will guess the rest.

With the multiplicity of business every person has to do, how can people complain of being distressed for somewhat to pass the time Besides

private affairs to conduct, or oversee; children to form to wisdom and virtue; the distressed to relieve; the unthinking to advise; friends and country to serve; their own passions to conquer; their minds to furnish with knowledge, virtue, and religion; a whole eternity's happiness to provide for.

Try a friend before you trust him. Trust him no more than is necessary. Bear with any weakness that does not strike at the root of friendship. If a difference arise, bring the matter to a calm hearing. Make up the breach, if possible. But if friendship languishes for any time, let it expire peaceably.

There is as much meanness in taking every trifle for an affront, as in putting up with the grossest indignity. The first is the character of a bully; the latter of a coward: which of the two had you rather be?

Those are the best diversions, which most relieve the mind, and exercise the body; and which bring the least expense of time and money. Mirth is one thing, and mischief another.

It is strange to reflect a little upon some of the

irreconcileable contrarieties in human nature. Nothing seems more strongly worked into the constitution of the mind, than the love of liberty. Yet how very ready are we in some cases to give up our liberty? What more tyrannical than fashion? Yet how do all ranks, sexes, and ages enslave themselves in obedience to it. There is great reason to believe that it is wholly in compliance with custom, that many judicious, thinking people, waste so many valuable hours as we see they do, at an amusement, which must be a slavery to persons capable of thought, I mean the card-table. But such people ought to consider, how they can justify to themselves the throwing away so great a part of precious life, besides giving their countenance to a bad practice; merely because it is the fashion.

If you can live independent, never give up your liberty, and your leisure, much less your conscience, to a great man. He has nothing to give in return for them. If you can but be contented in moderate circumstances, you may be happy, and keep your inestimable liberty, leisure, and integrity into the bargain.

If you chance to have a quarrel with any one, by no means write letters, or send messages; bring the matter to a hearing, as quickly as possible, before your spirits have time to rankle. Endeavour rather to reconcile than conquer your enemy. By so doing, you take from him the inclination to hurt you, which is the best security. When you have reconciled him, take care, if you find he has acted a traitorous part, never to trust, or be intimately concerned with him, any more. You may love him as a fellow-creature; but not confide in him as a good man.

People are better found out in their unguarded hours, than by the principal actions of their lives: the first is nature, the second art.

Asking a favour by letter, or giving a person time to think of it, is only giving him an opportunity of getting off handsomely.

It is not hard to find out a man's true merit, as to abilities. He who behaves well, is certainly no weak man. But nothing is more difficult, than to find out a man's character as to integrity.

He, who never misbehaved either in joy, in grief, or surprise, must have his wisdom at command, in a manner almost superior to humanity, and may be pronounced a true hero.

If you have made an injudicious friendship, let it sink gently and gradually; if you blow it up at once, mischief may be the consequence: nevedisoblige, if you can possibly avoid it.

Irresolution is as foolish as rashness. If the husbandman should never sow, or the ship-master never put to sea, where would be the harvest, or the gains?

If you want to keep the good opinion of a great person, whom you find to be a man of understanding: don't thrust yourself upon him, but let him send for you, when he wants you. Don't pump for his secrets, but stay till he tells you them; nor offer him your advice unasked; nor repeat any thing of what passes between you, relating to family, or state-affairs; nor boast of your intimacy with him; nor shew yourself ready to sneak and cringe; if your scheme be, to make your fortune at any rate, put on your boots, and plunge through thick and thin.

Take care of falling out of conceit with your wife, your station, habitation, business, or any thing else, which you cannot change. Let no comparisons once enter into your mind: the consequence will be restlessness, envy, and unhappiness.

If you would not be forestalled by another, or laughed at in case of a disappointment, don't tell your designs.

I would not answer for the conduct of the ablest man in the world, if I knew that he was so conceited of his own abilities, as to be above advice.

There is more good to be done in life by obstinate diligence, and perseverance, than most people seem aware of. The ant and bee are but little and weak animals; and yet by constant application they do wonders.

Where lies the wisdom of that revenge, which recoils upon one's self? Instead of getting the better of your enemy, by offending your Maker in revenging an injury, you give your enemy the advantage of seeing you punished. If you would have the whole advantage, forgive; and then, if he does not repent, the whole punishment will fall upon him.

Profuse giving or treating is laughed at by the wise, according to the old saying, Fools make feasts, &c.

Would you punish the spiteful? Shew him,

that you are above his malice. The dart, he threw at you, will then rebound, and pierce him to the heart.

He who promises rashly, will break his promise with the same ease as he made it.

Keep a watch over yourself, when you are in extreme good humour: artful people will take that opportunity to draw you into promises, which may embarrass you either to break, or keep.

You may safely be umpire among strangers, but not among friends: in deciding between the former, you may gain; among the latter, you must lose.

In a free country, there is little to be done by force: gentle means may gain you those ends, which violence would for ever put out of your power.

E.E

In affliction, constrain yourself to bear patiently for a day, or so, only for the sake of trying, whether patience does not lighten the burden; if the experiment answers, as you will undoubtedly find, you have only to continue it. If it gives you pain, or shame, to think of changing your scheme at the remonstrance of your faithful friend (which shews extreme weakness in you) you may get over that difficulty, by seeming to have thought of some other additional consideration, which has moved you to follow his advice.

Never trust a man for the vehemence of his asseverations, whose bare word you would not trust: a knave will make no more of swearing to a falsehood, than of affirming it.

If you borrow, be sure of making punctual payment; else you will have no more trust.

Is it not better that your friend tell you your faults privately, than that your enemy talk of them publicly?

He who is unhappy, and can find no comfort at home, is unhappy indeed.

Where there is a prospect of doing good, neither be so forward in thrusting yourself into the direction of the business, as to keep out others, who might manage it better; nor so backward, through false modesty, as to let the thing go undone, for want of somebody to do it. If no one else, who could execute a good work better, will engage in it, do you undertake, and execute it as well as you can.

A princely mind will ruin a private fortune. Keep the rank in which Providence hath placed you: and do not make yourself unhappy, because you cannot afford whatever a wild fancy might suggest. The revenues of all the kingdoms of the world would not be equal to the expense of one extravagant person.

The man of books is generally awkward in business: the man of business is often superficial in knowledge.

In engaging yourself for any person or thing, you will be sure to entangle yourself, if things should not turn out to your expectations. And if you get off for a little ridicule, think it a good bargain.

Let scandal alone, and it will die away of itself, oppose it, and it will spread the faster.

Let safety and innocence be two indispensable ingredients in all your amusements: is there any pleasure in what leads to loss of health, fortune, or soul?

Your neighbour has more income than enough; you have just enough. Is your neighbour the better for having what he has no use for? Are you the worse for being free from the trouble of what would be useless to you?

Better not make a present at all, than do it in a pitiful manner: every thing of elegance, is better let alone than clumsily performed.

Be not desirous of scenes of grandeur, of heightened pleasures and diversions: it is the sure way to take your heart off from your private station, and way of life, and to make you uneasy and unhappy. It is a thousand to one but, if you were to get into a higher station, you would find it awkward and unsuitable to you, and that you should only want to return again to your former happy independence.

There is no time spent more stupidly, than that which some luxurious people pass in a morning between sleeping and waking, after nature has been fully gratified. He who is awake, may be doing somewhat: he who is asleep, is receiving the refreshment necessary to fit him for action: but the hours spent in dozing and slumbering, can hardly be called existence.

Do not scold or swear at your servants: they will despise you for a passionate, clamorous fool. Do not make them too familiar with you: they will make a wrong use of it, and grow saucy. Do not let them know all the value you have for them: they will presume upon your goodness, and conclude that you cannot do without them. Don't give them too great wages: it will put them above their business. Do not allow them too much liberty: they will want still more and more. Do not intreat them to live with you: if you do, they will conclude, they may live as they please.

If you want to try experiments, take care at least, that they be not dangerous ones.

Don't think to prevail with a man in a fury, to calm his passion in a moment; if you can persuade him to put off his revenge for some time, it will be the most you can hope. Advice may sometimes do good, when you do not expect it. People do not care to seem persuaded to alter any part of their conduct: for that is an acknowledgment, that they were in the wrong. But they may, perhaps, reflect afterwards upon what you said; and, if they do not wholly reform the fault you reproved, they may rectify it in some measure.

Never disablige servants, if you can avoid it. They are often mischievous, and having lived with you, have it in their power to misrepresent and injure you.

Great people think their inferiors do only their duty in serving them: And that they do theirs in rewarding their services with a nod or smile. The lower part of mankind have minds too sordid to be capable of gratitude. It is therefore chiefly from the middle rank that you may look for a sense and return of kindness.

In proposing your business, be rather too full, than too brief, to prevent mistakes. In affairs, of which you are a judge, make the proposal yourself. In cases which you do not understand, wait, if possible, till another makes it to you.

Be fearful of one you have once got the better of. You know not how you may have irritated him; nor how deeply revenge works in his heart against you.

If you ask a favour, which you had some pretensions to, and meet with a refusal, it will be impolitic to shew that you think yourself ill used. You will act a more prudent part in seeming satisfied

with the reasons given. So you may take another opportunity of soliciting; and, may chance to be successful: for the person, you have obliged, will, if he has any grace, be ashamed, and puzzled to refuse you a second time.

If you are defamed, consider, whether the prosecution of the person, who has injured you, is not more likely to spread the report, than to clear your innocence. If so, your regard for yourself will teach you what course to take.

If it should be hard to do your duty, it is evidently not impossible. To mention none of the Christian heroes, there is not a virtue which the Heathens have not shewn to be practicable. Do not pretend that a Christian cannot be chaste, when you know that young Scipio bravely resisted a most powerful temptation of that kind, in yielding to which, he would have acted only according to the custom of those times. Do not pretend that it is impossible for a Christian to forgive injuries. when you know, that Phocion, going to suffer death unjustly, charged it upon his son, with his last breath, that he should shew no resentment against his father's persecutors. Do not excuse yourself in giving up the truth, through fear of offending those, on whom you depend, when you

know, that Attilius Regulus gave himself up to tortures, and death, rather than falsify his word even to his enemies. Let it not be said, that a Christian, with his clear views of an over-ruling Providence, shall be overcome with affliction, or impiously murmur against the great disposer of all things, when we find an Epictetus, sunk in misery and slavery, vindicating the Divine disposal of himself, and subduing his mind to the dispensations of Providence. Do not excuse yourself from a little expence, trouble, or hazard of ill-will for the general good, when you know, that a Leonidas, a Calpurnius Flamma, the Decii, and hundreds more, voluntarily devoted themselves to destruction, to save their country. If you pretend to be a Christian, that is, to profess the most pure and most sublime principles in the world, do not infamously fall short of the perfection of a set of un-enlightened Heathens.

If a temptation solicits, think whether you would yield to it, if you knew you should die next day.

It is in any man's power to be contented; of very few to be rich. The first will infallibly make you happy; which is more than you can depend on from the latter.

A good man has nothing to fear. A bad man every thing. It is not easy to keep the mean between temporizing too much, and giving a proper testimony for decency and virtue, when one sees them outraged.

Do not regard any person's opinion of you, against your own knowledge.

Custom will have the same effect, with respect to death, as to other frightful things; it will take off its terror.

To understand a subject well, read a set of the best authors upon it; make an abstract of it; and talk it over with the judicious.

Be assured, whatever you may think now, when you come to a death-bed, you will think you have given yourself up too much to pleasures and other worldly pursuits, and be sorry that you had so large a share of them.

He who begins soon to be good, is like to be very good at last.

Take care not to go to the brink of vice, lest you fall down the precipice.

Moral truths are as certain as mathematical. It is as certain, that good is not evil, nor evil good, as that a part is less than the whole, or that a circle is not a triangle.

Fashion ought to have no weight in matters of any greater consequence than the cut of a coat, or a cap. Numbers do not alter right and wrong. If it should be the fashion of this world to act foolishly and wickedly, depend on it, the fashion of the next will be, for virtue to be rewarded and vice punished.

To excel greatly in music, drawing, dancing, the pedantic parts of learning, play, and other accomplishments, rather ornamental than useful, is beneath a gentleman, and shews, that to acquire such perfection in trifles, he must have employed himself in a way unworthy the dignity of his station. The peculiar accomplishments, in which a man of rank ought to shine, are knowledge of the world, acquired by history, travel, conversation, and business; of the constitution, interest, and laws of his country; and of morals and religion; without excluding such a competent understanding of other subjects, as may be consistent with a perfect mastery of the accomplishments which make the gentleman's proper calling.

If you have the esteem of the wise and good, don't trouble yourself about the rest. And if you have not even that, let the approbation of a well-informed conscience make you easy in the mean while.

A good man gets good out of evil. A wicked man turns good to evil.

The meanest spirit may bear a slight affliction. And in bearing a great calamity, there is great glory, and a great reward.

A wise man will improve by studying his own past follies. For every slip will discover some weakness still uncorrected, which occasioned his misbehaviour; and will set him upon effectually redressing every failure.

To be drawn into a fault shews human frailty. To be habitually guilty of folly shews a corrupt mind. To love vice in others is the spirit of a devil, rather than a man; being the pure, disinterested love of vice, for its own sake. Yet there are such characters.

To abuse the poor for his poverty is to insult God's providence.

Proofs of genuine repentance, are, abstaining from all temptations to the same vice; thorough reformation; and all possible reparation.

Seek virtue rather than riches. You may be sure to acquire the first; but cannot promise for the latter. No one can rob you of the first without your consent; you may be deprived of the latter a hundred ways. The first will gain you the esteem of all good and wise men: the latter will get you flatterers enough; but not one real friend. The first will abide by you for ever; the latter will leave you at death, to shift, as you can, for eternity.

Never force nature. When study becomes a burden, give it over for that time. You will not improve by it, if it goes against the grain.

Take care of those vices which resemble virtues.

You may easily know, whether you are in earnest about reforming, and living virtuously. If you be, you will fly from every temptation to vice, and carefully pursue every help to virtue. As you may know whether you love money, by observing, whether you carefully pursue the means for getting, and cautiously avoid occasions of expense, or loss.

Preserve, if you can, the esteem of the wise and good. But more especially your own. Consider how deplorable a condition of mind you will be in, when your conscience tells you, you are a villain.

What signifies it what you know, if you don't know yourself?

It is pity that most people overdo either the active, or contemplative part of life. To be continually immersed in business is the way to become forgetful of every thing truly noble and liberal. To be wholly engaged in study, is to lose a great part of the usefulness of a social nature. How much better would it be, if people would temper action with contemplation, and use action as a relief to study?

It is not eating a great quantity of food, that nourishes most. Nor devouring of books, that gives solid knowledge. It is what you digest, that feeds both body and mind. Have your learning in your head; and not in your library.

You had better find out one of your own weaknesses, than ten of your neighbour's.

There is only one single object you ought to

pursue at all adventures. That is virtue. All other things are to be sought conditionally. What sort of man must be be, who resolves to be rich, or great, at any rate?

If you give only with a view to the gratitude of tnose you oblige, you deserve to meet with ingratitude. If you give from truly disinterested motives, you will not be discouraged or tired out by the worst returns.

It is not the part of a wise man to be eager after any thing, but improvement in goodness. All things else may be dispensed with.

Has not fashion a considerable share in the charities of the age? Let every one, who gives, carefully consider from what motives he acts.

If you have a well-disposed mind, you will go into no company more agreeable, or more useful, than your own. All is not well with those to whom solitude is disagreeable.

It is no shame to learn. The shame is to be ignorant.

If you have health, a competency, and a good

conscience, what would you have besides? Something to disturb your happiness?

To expect, young men, that your life should be one continued series of pleasure, is to expect to meet with what no mortal, from Adam down to the present times, has yet met with; and what by the nature of things would be more strange than the throwing the same number with a die ten million of times successively.

When you hear in company, or read in a pamphlet, something smart and lively, and quite new to you, urged against any opinion, or maxim, allowed by men of the freest sentiments, and most improved understandings; do not let yourself be immediately perverted by it. But suppose, that though it may be new to you, it may have been often started and answered; and though you cannot at once confute it; others can. And make it your business, if the point be of consequence, to find out those, who can. Nothing is more weak, than to be staggered in your opinion by every trifle that may fall in your way.

It is hardly credible what acquisitions in knowledge one may make by carefully husbanding, and properly applying every spare moment. Accustom yourself to think the greatest part of your life already past; to contract your views, and schemes, and set light by a vain and transitory state, and all its vain enjoyments.

To feel old age coming on, will so little mortify a wise man, that he can think of it with pleasure; as the decay of nature shews him that the happy change of state, for which he has been all his life preparing himself, is drawing nearer. And surely it must be desirable, to find himself draw nearer to the end and the reward of his labours. The case of an old man, who has no comfortable prospect for futurity, and finds the fatal hour approaching, which is to deprive him of all his happiness; is too deplorable for any words to represent.

It is easy to live well among good people. But shew me the man, who can preserve his temper, his wisdom, and his virtue, in spite of strong temptation and universal example.

It is a shame, if any person poorer than you is more contented than you.

Are you content to be for ever undone, if you should happen not to live till the time you have

set for repentance? If so, put it off a little longer and take your chance.

Strive to excel in what is truly noble. Mediocrity is contemptible.

Judge of books, as of men. There is none wholly faultless, or perfect. That production may be said to be a valuable one, by the perusal of which a judicious reader may be the wiser and better; and is not to be despised for a few deficiencies, or inconsistencies.

Honesty sometimes fails. But it is because diligence, or abilities are wanting. Otherwise it is naturally by far an over-match for cunning.

A bad reputation will lye a stumble-block in your way to rising in life, and will disable you from doing good to others.

If ever you were dangerously ill, what fault or folly lay heaviest upon your mind? Take care to root it out, without delay, and without mercy.

An unjust acquisition is like a barbed arrow, that must be drawn backward with horrible anguish; else it will be your destruction.

The consciousness of having acted from principle, and without the praise, or privity, of any person whatever, is a pleasure superior to all that applause can yield.

Why do you desire riches and grandeur? Because you think they will bring happiness with them. The very thing you want is now in your power. You have only to study contentment.

Don't be frightened, if misfortune stalks into your humble habitation. She sometimes takes the liberty of walking into the presence-chamber of kings.

Be open with prudence. Be artless with innocence. Wise as the serpent; harmless as the dove. If either of these two qualities must predominate, by all means let it be the latter.

It is a shameful wickedness common in trade, conceal the faults, or artfully heighten the good qualities, of what one wants to sell, or to disparage any article one has a mind to buy, in order to have it the cheaper. That trader, who cannot lay his hand upon his heart, and say, God, who knows all things, knows, I use my neighbour as I

would wish to be used; is no other, in plain English, than a downright knave.

To love a woman merely for her beauty, is loving a corpse for the sake of its being covered with a fair skin. If the lovely body has a bad soul in it, it becomes then an object of aversion; not of affection.

Never think yourself out of danger of a disorder of body by sickness, or of the mind by passion.

When we hear of one dead suddenly, we are surprised. Whereas the great wonder is, that a machine of such frail materials, and exquisite work-manship as the human body is, should hold in motion for an hour together.

He only is truly virtuous, who would be so, if he had no prospect of gaining more happiness by virtue than vice. Though at the same time, it is reasonable, and commendable, to have a due respect to the recompence of reward, as things are at present constituted,

The lot of mankind upon an average is wonderfully equal. The distribution of happiness is not so irregular, as appears at first view. There can-

not indeed be any great inequality in the distribution of what is so inconsiderable as the temporal happiness enjoyed by mankind. The contented, retired, and virtuous man has the best share.

Who could imagine it possible to forget death, which every object puts one in mind of, and every moment brings nearer?

What a strange condition a man must be in, whose judgment and practice are at variance. If a man does not perfectly agree with his wife, they can sometimes avoid one another's company, and so be easy. But can one run away from himself?

Of all virtues, patience is oftenest wanted. How unhappy must he be, who is wholly unfurnished with what is wanted every moment?

He, who endeavours to drown thought, and stifle conscience, or who goes on in expensive living, without looking into his affairs, is about as wise, as he who should shut his eyes, and then fun toward the precipice, as if his not seeing the danger would annihilate it.

That the ways of virtue are preferable to those of vice, is evident, in that we do not find people in

old age, sickness, or on a death-bed, repenting, that they have lived too virtuously; but the contrary. This is a general confession from mankind, at a time when they certainly are sincere. And they would give the same testimony to virtue at other times, if they could disengage themselves from the prejudices and passions, which blind them.

Perhaps no created nature could be happy, without having experienced the contrast of unhappiness.

As no character is more venerable than that of a wise old man, so none is more contemptible than that of an old fool.

It will vex you to lose a friend for a smart stroke of raillery; or the opinion of the wise and good, for a piece of foolish behaviour at a merrymaking.

Mankind generally act not according to right; but more according to present interest; and most according to present passion: by this key you may generally get into their designs, and foretel what ourse they will take.

Never write letters about any affair that has occasioned, or may occasion, a difference: a thing looks bigger in a letter than in conversation.

That bad habits are not quite unconquerable, is evident from *Demosthènes*, *Cicero*, and many others. But that they are very troublesome to deal with, and grow always stronger and stronger, universal experience proves too sufficiently.

Don't let one failure in a worthy and practicable scheme baffle you: the more difficulty, the more glory.

Don't deceive yourself. The true preparation for death, is not living at random to threescore, and then retiring from the world, and giving up a few of the last years of life to prayer and repentance. But cultivating in your mind, from the beginning, the substantial virtues, which are the true ornament of a worthy character, and which naturally fit for endless happiness.

The more you enlarge your concerns in life, the more chances you will have of embarrassments.

Listen to conscience, and it will tell you, whether you really do as you would be done by.

In estimating the worth of men, keep a guard upon your judgment, that it be not biassed by wealth or splendor. At the same time there is no necessity for treating with a cynical insolence, every person whom Providence hath placed in an eminent station, merely because your experience teaches you, that very few of the great are deserving of the esteem of the wise and good. Consider the temptations which besiege the great, and render it almost impossible for them to come at truth. And make all reasonable allowances. If you see any thing like real goodness of heart in a person of high rank, admire it, as an uncommon instance of excellence, which in a more private station, would have risen to an extraordinary pitch of perfection.

If you do not set your whole thoughts upon a business, while you are about it, it is ten to one but you mismanage it: if you set your affections immoveably upon worldly things, you will become a sordid earthworm.

There is nothing more foolish than for those to fall out, who must live together, as husband and wife, and such near relations. But there is no falling out without folly, on one side, or other, or both.

The folly of some people in conversation, is beneath criticism. The only way of answering them, is to go out of hearing. Let a man consider what the general turn of his thoughts is. It is that which characterises the man. He who thinks oftenest, and dwells longest, on worldly things, is an earthly man. He, whose mind is habitually employed in divine contemplation, is an heavenly man.

In proportion to the grief and shame, which a bad action would have caused you, such will be your joy, and triumph, on reflecting, that you have bravely resisted the temptation.

Are not the great happiest, when most free of the incumbrances of greatness? Is there then any hapepness in greatness?

The hand of time heals all diseases. Human nature cannot long continue in violent anger, grief, or distress of any kind. Spare yourself immoderate uneasiness. The time will come, when all these things which now engage you so much, will be, as if they never had been; except your own character for virtue, or vice.

If you live such a life, that you may be able upon rational grounds, to be patient at the last hour, when your near friends lose all patience, you will shew yourself a true hero. Don't be uneasy, if you cannot master all science. You may easily know enough to be good and happy.

He who suffers lust to steal away his youth, ambition his manhood, and avarice his old age, may lament too late, the shortness of the useful part of his life.

If you have a family, it is no more allowable that you squander away your substance, than for a steward to embezzle the estate, of which he is manager. You are appointed steward to your children: and if you neglect to provide for them, be it at your peril.

A truly great mind, from mere reverence for itself, would not descend to think a base thought, if it was never to be known to God, or man.

This book is not likely to be read by any, whose station in life is not such, that thousands, and millions of mankind would think worthy of envy. It will then be very strange, if it should be read by any discontented person.

If you would not have affliction visit you twice; listen, at once, to what it teaches.

He, who is free from any immediate distress, and cannot be happy now, it is in vain for him to think he ever shall, unless he changes the temper of his mind, which is what hinders his happiness at present.

Never cast your eye upon a good man, without resolving to imitate him. Whenever you see an instance of vice or folly in another, let it be a warning to you, to avoid them.

I know no way of laying out a few shillings to more advantage, either for profit or pleasure, than upon an entertaining and instructing book. But this expence is greatly overdone by some, and ill laid out by others.

While you are unhappy, because your tailor has not cut your coat to your mind, many an honest man would be glad to have one that would only keep out the cold; and cannot. While you are in a passion with your cook, because he has spoiled you one dish among six, many a poor family, who are your fellow-creatures, and fellow-Christians, are at a loss for bread, to supply the wants of nature. Think of this, and give over with shame, your foolish and impious complaints against that goodness of Providence, which has placed you in

circumstances so much above persons of equal merit with yourself.

It makes wretched work, when the married pair come to disputing about privilege, and superiority.

Consider with yourself, whether the wise an good would value you more or less, if they knew your whole character.

It is well when old people know that they are old. Many, on the contrary, still affect to set themselves off as unimpaired in abilities both bodily and mental, long enough after they have outlived themselves.

It is necessary often to find fault. And the only way to do it, so as to be regarded, is to keep up your own dignity. A master, who blusters and swears at his servant, is despised, while he who reproves with mildness and gravity is likely to be reverenced and obeyed.

The use of reading is, to settle your judgment; not to confound it by a variety of opinions, nor to enslave it by authority.

If you are ever so sure, that you ought to resent

an injury, at least put off your resentment, till you cool. You will gain every end better by that means, and can lose nothing by going cautiously and deliberately to work; whereas you may do yourself, or your neighbour, great mischief by proceeding rashly and hastily.

If you find, you cannot hold your own with the world, without making shipwreck of conscience, and integrity; retire in time, with a stock of honesty, rather than continue in business, to retire at last with a stock of wealth, which will not yield you happiness, when your integrity is gone.

The giver is the creditor; the receiver the debtor. Had you not better be the former than the atter?

I know no sight more nauseous than that of a fond husband and wife, who have not the sense to behave properly to one another before company. Nor any conversation more shocking, than that of a snarling couple, who are continually girding at one another.

The unthinking bulk of mankind are ever amusing themselves with some pursuit foreign to themselves. A wise man is ever looking inward.

Married people ought to consider, that the keeping up of mutual love and peace, is of more consequence, than any point, which either the one or the other can want to gain, where life or fortune are not engaged. Let the husband consider, that it suits his superior wisdom to yield to the weaker in ordinary cases. Let the wife remember, she solemnly promised to obey.

The advantage our passions have over us, is owing to ourselves. We may easily gain such a knowledge of our own weakness, as to feel them rising, before they be got to the heighth. And it is our own fault, if we do not restrain them in time.

Whoever knows his own weaknesses, and has the sense to endeavour to get rid of them, will find himself as fully employed, in his own mind, as a physician in an hospital.

It is no wonder if he who reads, converses, and meditates, improves in knowledge. By the first, a man converses with the dead, by the second, with the living, and by the third, with himself. So that he appropriates to himself all the knowledge, which can be got from those who have lived, and from those now alive.

It may not be in your power to excel many people in riches, honours, or abilities. But you may excel thousands in what is incomparably more valuable, I mean, substantial goodness of heart and life. Hither turn your ambition. Here is an object worthy of it.

A very ignorant man may have a very learned library. A very learned man may be a very contemptible creature.

Endeavour to do all the good in your power. Be as active, with prudence, as if you were sure of success. When you meet a disappointment, let it not abate your diligence, nor put you out of humour, And when you have done all, remember, you have only done your duty.

The Dutch will not suffer the smallest breach in their dykes, for fear of an inundation. Do not suffer the smallest passage for vice into your heart lest you find your virtue quite overflowed.

Do not be unhappy, if you have not married a professed beauty. They generally admire themselves so much, they have no love left for their husbands. Besides, it might not perhaps have been very agreeable to you, to see every fellow, as you

went into public places, look at your wife, as if he could devour her with his eyes.

Take care of natural biasses, as self-love, pleasure, &c. Be sure, you will always incline enough toward the biass-side. Therefore, you need have no guard upon yourself that way.

In bestirring yourself for the public advantage, remember, that, if you should not accomplish all that you propose, you will however have employed yourself to good purpose, and will not fail of your reward, if you should of success.

Make sure, first, and principally, of that knowledge, which is necessary for you, as a man, and a member of society. Next of what is necessary in your particular way of life. Afterwards improve yourself in all useful and ornamental knowledge, as far as your capacity, leisure, and fortune will allow.

The great business of a man is to improve his mind and govern his manners.

What sculpture is to a block of marble, education is to a human soul. The philosopher, the saint, and the hero, the wise, the good, or the great man, very often lie hid and concealed in a

plebeian, which a proper education might have disinterred, and have brought to light.

Parents are commonly more careful to bestow wit on their children, than virtue; the art of speaking well, rather than doing well: but their manners ought to be the great concern.

It ought always to be steadily inculcated, that virtue is the highest proof of understanding, and the only solid basis of greatness; and that vice is the natural consequence of narrow thoughts; that t begins in mistake, and ends in ignominy.

Zeno, hearing a young man speak too freely, told him, for this reason we have two ears, and but one tongue; that we should hear much and speak little.

Agesilaus, being asked, what he thought most proper for boys to learn; answered, what they ought to do when they come to be men.

An industrious and virtuous education of children is a better inheritance for them, than a great estate. To what purpose is it, said *Crates*, to heap up great estates, and have no concern what manner of heirs you leave them to?

The magisterial severity of some pedagogues frights more learning out of children, than ever they can whip into them.

None can be eminent without application and genius. Aristotle says, that to become an able man in any profession whatsoever, three things are necessary, which are nature, study, and practice.

A man of ingenuity may go a great way in the field of learning, by himself. Heraclitus, a philosopher of Ephesus, had no master or tutor; but attained to great knowledge by his own private study and diligence. Though this can be no rule it is an example to those who have not the advantage of a guide.

The memory of the ancients is hardly in any thing more to be celebrated, than in their strict and useful institution of youth: by labour they prevented luxury in their young people, till wisdom and philosophy had taught them to resist and despise it.

The bulk of mankind must, without the assistance of education and instruction, be informed only with the underst anding of a child.

It is the common custom of the world to follow example, rather than precept; but it would be the safer course to learn by precept, rather than example.

It is observed, that education is generally the worse, in proportion to the wealth and grandeur of the parents. Many are apt to think, that to dance, fence, speak French, and know how to behave among great persons, comprehends the whole duty of a gentleman; which opinion is enough to destroy all the seeds of knowledge, honour, wisdom, and virtue among us.

Lycurgus seeing a keeper teaching a bloodhound to follow a train; observe, said he, what pains yonder master takes to make his servant useful and profitable for his pleasure: who would not then train up with diligence his son in the school of virtue, that he may be a profitable servant of the commonwealth?

He that is taught to live upon little, owes more to his father's wisdom, than he that has a great deal left him, does to his father's care.

It is great imprudence to determine children to any particular business, before their temper and inclinations are well known. Every one, says Horace, is best in his own profession; that which fits us best, is best; nor is any thing more fitting, than that every one should consider his own genius and capacity, and act accordingly.

The mind ought sometimes to be diverted, that it may return to thinking the better. Little reading, and much thinking, little speaking, and much hearing, is the best way to improve in knowledge.

The sciences chiefly to be recommended are natural and moral philosophy; for these entertain us with the images and beauties both of nature and of virtue; show us what we are, and what we ought to be: to which we may add mechanics, agriculture, and navigation. Most other studies are, in a manner, emptiness and air; diversions to recreate the mind, but not of weight enough to make them our business.

Many bad things are done only for custom, which will make a good practice as easy to us as an ill one.

Examples do not authorize a fault. Vice must never plead prescription.

Custom is the plague of wise men, and the idol of fools.

The opinions of men are as many and as different as their persons; the greatest diligence, and most prudent conduct, can never please them all.

The subject of duties is the most useful part of all philosophy.

To be prudent, honest, and good, are infinitely higher accomplishments, than the being nice, florid, learned, or all that which the world calls great scholars, and fine gentlemen.

It was a good reply of Plato, to one who murmured at his reproving him for a small matter: custom, said he, is no small matter. A custom or habit of life does frequently alter the natural inclination either to good or evil.

Opinion is the main thing which does good or harm in the world. It is our false opinions of things which ruin us.

Whether fondness of fashion, or love of novelty, betray men into the most mistakes, it is difficult

to determine. The best things are slighted by some for mere antiquity, though founded upon authority and reason; and others maintain a veneration for whatever custom has established, though founded upon neither.

Vicious habits are so great a stain to human nature, and so odious in themselves, that every person, actuated by right reason, would avoid them, though he was sure they would be always concealed both from God and man, and had no future punishment entailed upon them.

A judge, who is prepossessed in any cause, and does not hear both sides indifferently, though the judgment he gives be right, yet himself errs; for there can be no integrity, where there is any partiality.

Necessity, that great refuge and excuse for human frailty, breaks through all laws; and he is not to be accounted in fault, whose crime is not the effect of choice, but force.

The man who wants mercy, makes the law of the land his gospel, and all his cases of conscience are determined by his attorney. The guilt of being unfortunate is never to be defended by the best advocate in the world; all he can do, or say, will be received with prejudice by an uncompassionate creditor.

Innocence is no protection against tyrannical power; for accusing is proving, where malice and force are joined in the presecution. Force governs the world, and success consecrates the cause. What avails it the lamb to have the better cause, if the wolf have the stronger teeth? It is to no purpose to stand reasoning, where the adversary is both party and judge.

Solon being asked, why among his laws, there was not one against personal affronts; answered, he could not believe the world so fantastical as to regard them.

A man of virtue is a honour to his country, a glory to humanity, and satisfaction to himself, and a benefactor to the whole world: he is rich without oppression or dishonesty, charitable without ostentation, courteous without deceit, and brave without vice.

An angry man, who suppresses his passions, thinks worse than he speaks; and an angry man that will chide, speaks worse than he thinks.

There have been many laws made by men, which swerve from honesty, reason, and the dictates of nature. By the law of arms, he is degraded from all honour who puts up an affront; and, by the civil law, he that takes vengeance for it, incurs a capital punishment. He that seeks redress by law for an affront, is disgraced; and he that does not seek redress this way, is punished by the laws.

Perjury is not only a wrong to particular persons, but treason against human society; subverting at once the foundations of public peace and justice, and the private security of every man's life and ortune.

Better to prevent a quarrel beforehand, than to revenge it afterward.

A vindictive temper is not only uneasy to others, but to them that have it.

Dislike what deserves it, but never hate; for that is of the nature of malice, which is almost ever to persons, not to things.

Anger may glance into the breast of a wise man but rests only in the bosom of fools. What can be more honorable than to have courage enough to execute the commands of reason and conscience; to maintain the dignity of our nature, and the station assigned us: to be proof against poverty, pain, and death itself; so far as not to do any thing that is scandalous or sinful to avoid them: to stand adversity under all shapes with decency and resolution? To do this is to be great above title and fortune. This argues the soul of a heavenly extraction, and is worthy the offspring of the Deity.

Men will have the same veneration for a person who suffers adversity without dejection, as for demolished temples, the very ruins whereof are reverenced and adored.

There can be no peace in human life without the contempt of all events.

As fortitude suffers not the mind to be dejected with any evils; so temperance suffers it not to be drawn from honesty by any allurements.

Charity obliges not to mistrust a man; prudence, not to trust him before we know him.

Prudence is of more frequent use than any other

intellectual quality; it is exerted on slight occasions, and called into act by the cursory business of common life.

There is a mean in all things: even virtue itself has its stated limits; which not being strictly observed, it ceases to be virtue.

A virtuous habit of the mind is so absolutely necessary to influence the whole life, and beautify every particular action; to over-balance or repel all the gilded charms of avarice, pride, and self-interest; that a man deservedly procures the lasting epithets of good or bad, as he appears either swayed by, or regardless of it.

If you be affronted, it is better to pass it by in silence, or with a jest, though with some dishonour, than to endeavour revenge. If you can keep reason above passion, that and watchfulness will be your best defendants.

None more impatiently suffer injuries, than those that are most forward in doing them.

There is not any revenge more heroic, than that which torments envy, by doing good.

What men want of reason for their opinions, they usually supply and make up in rage.

Discord is every where a troublesome companion: but when it is shut up within a family, and happens among relations that cannot easily part, it is harder to deal with,

It is much better to reprove than to be angry secretly.

By taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy; but, in passing it over, he is superior.

To be able to bear provocation is an argument of great wisdom; and to forgive it, of a great mind.

None should be so implacable as to refuse a humble submission. He whose very best actions must be seen with favorable allowance, cannot be too mild, moderate, and forgiving.

There cannot possibly be a greater extravagance, than for a man to run the hazard of losing his life to satisfy his revenge. When Mark Anthony, after the battle Actium, challenged Augustus, he took no further notice of the insult, than sending back

this answer: If Anthony was weary of his life, there were other ways of dispatch beside fighting him; and, for his part, he should not trouble himself to be his executioner.

Revenge stops at nothing that is violent and wicked. The histories of all ages are full of the tragical outrages that have been executed by this diabolical passion.

We often forgive those that have injured us, but we can never pardon those that we have injured.

As we often are incensed without a cause, so we continue our anger, lest it should appear to our disgrace, to have begun without occasion.

A wise man has no more anger than shows he can apprehend the *first* wrong, nor any more revenge than justly to prevent a *second*.

We must forget the good we do, for fear of uporaiding: and religion bids us forget injuries, lest the remembrance of them should suggest to us a desire of revenge.

The most tolerable sort of revenge is for those

wrongs which there is no law to remedy: but then let a man take heed that the revenge be such as there is no law to punish; else a man's enemy is still beforehand, and is two for one.

Hatred is so durable and so obstinate, that reconciliation on a sick-bed is the greatest sign of death.

A wise man will desire no more than what he may get justly, use soberly, distribute cheerfully, and live contentedly.

The best way to humble a proud man is to take no notice of him.

The tallest trees are most in the power of the winds, and ambitious men of the blasts of fortune. Great marks are soonest hit.

A person who squanders away his fortune in rioting and profuseness, is neither just to himself or others; for, by a conduct of this kind, his superfluities flow in an irregular channel, and those that are the most unworthy are the greatest sharers of them, who do not fail to censure him when his substance is exhausted.

A man's desires always disappoint him; for

though he meets with something that gives him satisfaction, yet it never thoroughly answers his expectation.

What man in his right senses, that has wherewithal to live free, would make himself a slave for superfluities? What does that man want, who has enough? Or what is he the better for abundance, that can never be satisfied?

The most laudable ambition is to be wise; and the greatest wisdom is to be good. We may be as ambitious as we please, so we aspire to the best things.

Cleobulus being asked, why he sought not to be advanced to honour and preferment, made this reply: O friend, as long as I study and practise humility, I know where I am; but, when I shall hunt after dignities and promotion, I am afraid I shall lose myself.

A wise man values himself upon the score of virtue, and not of opinion; and thinks himself neither better nor worse for what others say of him.

He that praises, bestows a favour; but he that detracts, commits a robbery.

It is observed, that the most censorious are generally the least judicious; who, having nothing to recommend themselves, will be finding faults with others. No man envies the merit of another, that has any of his own.

He that envies, makes another man's virtue his ice, and another's happiness his torment; whereas, he that rejoices at the prosperity of another, is a partaker of the same.

A good word is an easy obligation; but not to speak ill requires only our silence, which costs us nothing.

The worthiest people are most injured by slanderers; as we usually find that to be the best fruit, which the birds have been pecking at.

It is a folly for an eminent man to think of escaping censure, and a weakness to be affected with it. Fab. Maximus said, he was a greater coward that was afraid of reproach, than he that fled from his enemies.

It is harder to avoid censure, than to gain applause; for this may be done by one great or wise action in an age; but, to escape censure, a man

must pass his whole life, without saying or doing one ill or foolish thing.

Philip of Macedon said, he was beholden to the Athenian orators for reproving him; for he would endeavour both by words and actions to make them liars. And Plato, hearing it was asserted by some persons that he was a very bad man, said, I shall take care to live, so that no body will believe them.

The failings of good men are commonly more published in the world than their good deeds; and one fault of a well-deserving man shall meet with more reproaches, than all his virtues praise: such is the force of ill-will and ill-nature.

Censure is the tax a man pays the public for being eminent.

When any man speaks ill of us, we are to make use of it as a caution, without troubling ourselves at the calumny. He is in a wretched case, that values himself upon other people's opinions, and depends upon their judgment for the peace of his life.

It is in the power of every man to preserve his probity; but no man living has it in his power to

say, that he can preserve his reputation, while there are so many evil tongues in the world ready to blast the fairest character; and so many open ears ready to receive their reports.

Other passions have objects to flatter them, and seemingly to content and satisfy them for a while: there is power in ambition, and pleasure in luxury, and pelf in covetousness; but envy can give nothing but vexation.

There is no condition so low, but may have hopes; nor any so high, that is out of the reach of fears.

Hope is very fallacious, and promises what it seldom gives; but its promises are more valuable than the gifts of fortune, and it seldom frustrates us without assuring us of recompensing the delay by great bounty.

When Anaxogoras was told of the death of his son, he only said, I knew he was mortal. So we, in all casualties of life, should say, I knew my riches were uncertain, that my friend was but a man. Such considerations would soon pacify us, because all our troubles proceed from their being unexpected.

A wise man, says Seneca, is provided for occurrences of any kind; the good he manages, the bad he vanquishes: in prosperity he betrays no presumption, in adversity he feels no despondency.

Hopes and disappointments, are the lot and entertainment of human life; the one serves to keep us from presumption, the other from despair.

There is a medium between an excessive diffidence and too universal a confidence. If we have no foresight, we are surprised; if it is too nice, we are miserable.

The apprehension of evil is many times worse than the evil itself; and the ills a man fears he shall suffer, he suffers in the very fear of them.

If you are disquieted at any thing, you should consider with yourself, is the thing of that worth, that for it I should so disturb myself, and lose my peace and tranquillity?

Fear is implanted in us as a preservative from evil; but its duty, like other passions, is not to overbear reason, but to assist it; nor should it be suffered to tyrannise in the imagination, to raise phantoms of horror, or beset life with supernumerary distresses.

There can be no peace in human life, without the contempt of all events. He that troubles his head with drawing consequences from mere contingencies, shall never be at rest.

The thing in the world, says *Montaigne*, I am most afraid of, is *fcar*; and with good reason; that passion alone, in the trouble of it, exceeding all other accidents.

We should take a prudent care for the future, but so as to enjoy the present. It is no part of wisdom to be miserable to-day, because we may happen to be so to-morrow.

We live in an age, when men are fond of learning, almost to the loss of religion. Nothing will pass with our men of wit and sense, but what is agreeable with the nicest reason; and every man's reason is his own understanding. These mighty pretenders have no truer ground to go upon, than other men: they plead for right reason; but they mean their own. In the mean time they take from us our surest guide, and religion suffers by their contentions about it.

Philosphy is then only valuable, when it serves for the law of life, and not the ostentation of science.

No knowledge which terminates in curiosity and speculation, is comparable to that which is of use: and of all useful knowledge, that is most so, which consists in a due care, and just notion of ourselves.

However we may be puffed up with vain conceits of new worlds of learning; it is certain we are yet much in the dark; that many of our discoveries are purely imaginary, and that the states of learning is so far from perfection, much more from being the subject of ostentation, that it ought to teach us modesty, and keep us humble.

Some are so very studious of learning what was done by the ancients, that they know not how to live with the moderns.

One would admire how it is possible for a wise man to spend his life in unprofitable inquiries. Some men, says St Evremond, make a merit of knowing what they might as well be ignorant of and are absolute strangers to what is really worth knowing.

Every man who proposes to grow eminent by learning, should carry in his mind at once the difficulty of excellence, and the force of industry; and remember that fame is not conferred but as the recompence of labour; and that labour, vigorously continued, has not often failed of its reward.

A man of sense does not so much apply himself to the most learned writings, in order to acquire knowledge; as the most rational, to fortify his reason.

Aristippus said, that the only fruit he had received from his philosophy, was to speak plainly to all the world, and to tell freely his thoughts of things.

To preserve the entire liberty of one's judgment, without being prepossessed with false reasons, or pretended authority, is a strength of mind whereof few are capable.

Fine sense and exalted sense, are not half so useful as common sense.

Men are apt to overvalue the tongues, and to think they have made a considerable progress in learning when they have once overcome these; yet in reality there is no internal worth in them, and men may understand a thousand languages without being the wiser.

What is the whole creation, but one great library: every volume in which, and every page in these volumes, are impressed with radiant characters of infinite wisdom; and all the perfections of the universe are contracted with such inimitable art in man, that he needs no other book but himself to make him a complete philosopher.

Of all human actions, pride seldomest obtains its end; for aiming at honour and reputation, it reaps contempt and derision.

Covetous men need money least, yet most affect it; and prodigals, who need it most, do least regard it.

That plenty should produce either covetousness or prodigality, is a perversion of providence; and yet the generality of men are the worse for their riches.

To live above our station shows a proud heart, and to live under it discovers a narrow soul.

Avarice and ambition are the two elements that enter into the composition of all crimes. Ambition is boundless, and avarice insatiable.

If a proud man makes me keep my distance, the comfort is, he keeps his at the same time.

Money, like manure, does no good till it is spread. There is no real use of riches, except it be in the distribution; the rest is but conceit.

It is not the *height* to which men are advanced, that makes them giddy; it is the *looking down* with contempt upon those below them.

It is a much easier task to dig metal out of its native mine, than to get it out of the covetous man's coffer. Death only has the key of the miser's chest.

What madness is it for a man to starve himself, to enrich his heir, and so turn a friend into an enemy! For his joy at your death will be proportioned to what you leave him.

A poor spirit is poorer than a poor purse. A very few pounds a year would ease a man of the scandal of avarice,

Pitiful! that a man should so care for riches, as if they were his own; yet so use them, as if they were another's: that when he might be happy in spending them, will be miserable in keeping them; and had rather, dying, leave wealth with his enemies, than, being alive, relieve his friends.

It is as disagreeable to a prodigal to keep an account of his expences, as it is to a sinner to examine his conscience; the deeper they search, the worse they find themselves.

Hope is the last thing that dies in man; and though it be exceeding deceitful, yet it is of this good use to us, that while we are travelling through this life, it conducts us an easier and more pleasant path to our journey's end.

It may serve as a comfort to us in all our calamities and afflictions, that he that loses any thing, and gets wisdom by it, is a gainer by the loss.

The expectation of future happiness is the best relief of anxious thoughts, the most perfect cure of melancholy, the guide of life, and the comfort of death.

Hopes and cares, anger and fears, divide our life.

Would you be free from these anxieties; think every day will be your last, and then the succeeding hours will be the more welcome, because unexpected.

There is but one way of fortifying the soul against all gloomy presages and terrors of mind; and that is, by securing to ourselves the friendship and protection of that being, who disposes of events and governs futurity.

The utmost perfection we are capable of in this world, is to govern our lives and actions by the rules which nature has set us, and keeping the order of our creation.

Nothing alleviates grief so much as the liberty of complaining: nothing makes one more sensible of joy than the delight of expressing it.

Passion has its foundation in nature: virtue is acquired by the improvement of our reason.

No man is master of himself, so long as he is a slave to any thing else.

He is the wise man, who, though not skilled in science, knows how to govern his passions and af-

fections. Our passions are our infirmities. He that can make a sacrifice of his will, is lord of himself.

It is the basest of passions to like what we have not, and slight what we possess.

Passion is a sort of fever in the mind, which ever leaves us weaker than it found us.

Prudence governs the wise; but there are only a few of that sort, and the most wise are not so at all times; whereas passion governs almost all the world, and at most times.

It is certainly much easier wholly to decline a passion, than to keep it within just bounds and measures; and that which few can moderate, almost any body may prevent.

Most men take least notice of what is plain, as if that were of no use; but puzzle their thoughts and lose themselves in those vast depths and abysses, which no human understanding can fathom.

It is a silly conceit, that men without languages are also without understanding: it is apparent ir

all ages, that some such have been even prodigies for ability; for it is not to be believed, that wisdom speaks to her disciples only in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.

The pains we take in books or arts, which treat of things remote from the use of life, is a busy idleness.

There is no necessity of being led through the several fields of knowledge: it will be sufficient to gather some of the fairest fruit from them all; and to lay up a store of good sense, sound reason, and solid virtue,

The variety of opinions among the learned, manifests, that there can be no certainty, where there is so much dissent.

We rarely meet with persons that have a true judgment; which, in many, renders literature a very tiresome knowledge. Good judges are as rare as good authors.

We read of a philosopher, who declared of himself, that the first year he entered upon the study of philosophy, he knew all things; the second year he knew something; but the third year nothing the more he studied, the more he declined in the opinion of his own knowledge, and saw more of the shortness of his understanding.

Absence cools moderate passions, and inflames violent ones; as the wind blows out candles, but kindles fires.

He that resigns his peace to little casualties, and suffers the course of his life to be interrupted by fortuitous inadvertencies of offences, delivers up himself to the direction of the wind, and loses all that constancy and equanimity, which constitute the chief praise of a wise man.

The philosopher Bion said pleasantly of the king, who by handfuls pulled his hair off his head for sorrow: Does this man think that baldness is a remedy for grief?

Passion makes them fools, which otherwise are not so; and shows them to be fools which are so.

We often hate, we know not why, without examining either the good or bad qualities of the person; and this senseless aversion of ours will sometimes fall upon men of extraordinary merit. It is the business of reason to correct this blind

passion, which is a reproach to it: for is there any thing more unjust, than to have an aversion to those that are a honour to human nature?

They that laugh at every thing, and they that fret at every thing, are fools alike.

The good government of our appetites, and corrupt inclinations, will make our minds cheerful and easy: contentment will sweeten a low fortune, and patience will make our sufferings light.

To be masters of ourselves and habits, it is indispensably necessary, that our thoughts be good and regular, which is effected by good converse either with books or persons: hence we may know ourselves, and adapt particular remedies to our weaknesses; for there is nothing impossible that is necessary to the accomplishment of our happiness.

To be covetous of applause discovers a slender merit; and self-conceit is the ordinary attendant of ignorance.

The most ignorant are most conceited, and the most impatient of advice, as unable to discern either their own folly, or the wisdom of others.

No man, whose appetites are his masters, can perform the duties of his nature with strictness and regularity. He that would be superior to external influences, must first become superior to his own passions.

It is to affectation the world owes its whole race of coxcombs: nature in her whole drama never drew such a part; she has sometimes made a fool, but a coxcomb is always of a man's own making.

Ostentation takes from the merit of any action. He that is vain enough to cry up himself, ought to be punished with the silence of other men.

The observation that no man is ridiculous for being what he is, but only in the affectation of being something more, is equally true in regard to the mind and the body.

They are more dangerously ill, that are drunk with vanity, than those with wine; for a morning makes one himself, but the other is unrecoverable.

The vanity of human life is like a river constantly passing away, and yet constantly coming on.

It is a common observation, that no man is content with his own condition, though it be the best; nor dissatisfied with his own wit, though it be the worst.

It is the infirmity of poor spirits to be taken with every appearance, and dazzled with every thing that sparkles: but great geniuses have but little admiration, because few things appear new to them.

The strongest passions allow us some rest; but vanity keeps us perpetually in motion. What a dust do I raise! says the fly upon the coach-wheel: and what a rate do I drive at! says the same fly upon the horse's buttock.

Socrates had so little esteem of himself, that he thought he knew nothing certainly, but that he knew nothing.

It happens to men truly learned, as to ears of corn; they shoot up and raise their heads high, while they are empty; but when full and swelled with grain, they begin to flag and droop.

Of all parts of wisdom, the practice is the best. Socrates was esteemed the wisest man of his time, because he turned his acquired knowledge into morality, and aimed at goodness more than greatness.

That good sense, says *Comines*, which nature affords us, is preferable to most of the knowledge that we can acquire.

Opinionative men will believe nothing but what they can comprehend; and there are but few things that they are able to comprehend.

Of all sorts of affectation, that which is most neurable, is the affectation of wisdom; because the disease is in the remedy itself, and falls upon reason, which only could and ought to cure it, if it were anywhere else.

It was a wise saying of Aristotle to an indiscreet and conceited person, that he wished he was what the other thought himself to be; and that his enemies were such as he was.

When men will not be reasoned out of a vanity, they must be ridiculed out of it.

A wise man endeavours to shine in himself, a fool to outshine others: the first is humbled by

the sense of his own infirmities; the last lifted up by the discovery of those which he observes in others. The wise man considers what he wants, and the fool what he abounds in. The wise man is happy, when he gains his own approbation; and the fool, when he recommends himself to the applause of those about him.

Men gain little by philosophy, but the means to speak probably of every thing, and to make themselves be admired by the less knowing.

He who wants good sense, is unhappy in having learning; for he has thereby only more ways of exposing himself.

Difficult and abstruse speculations raise a noise and a dust; but, when we examine what account they turn too, little comes of them, but heat and clamour, and contradiction.

True eloquence is good sense, delivered in a natural and unaffected way, without the artificial ornaments of tropes and figures. Our common eloquence is usually a cheat upon the understanding; it deceives us with appearances instead of things, and makes us think we see reason, while it is only tickling our sense.

The reason of things lies in a narrow compass, if the mind could at any time be so happy as to light it up. Most of the writings and discourses in the world are but illustration and rhetoric; which signifies as much as nothing to a mind in pursuit after the philosophical truth of things.

One philosopher is worth a thousand grammarians. Good sense and reason ought to be the umpire of all rules, both ancient and modern.

Obscurity in writing is commonly an argument of darkness in the mind: the greatest learning is to be seen in the greatest plainness.

THE END.

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